



LA Serve VISTA Project



Providing a way for parishes, communities and local residents to own their plan for fighting poverty in their neighborhoods.

What is *LA Serve VISTA*?

LA Serve VISTA is a statewide project designed to provide support to parishes, communities and residents working to improve Louisiana life. This project helps the people of Louisiana reduce the level of poverty found in many of our parishes.

LA Serve VISTA works within Volunteer Centers, AmeriCorps* State Programs or other nonprofits to create a site project with goals aimed at

- Engaging nonprofit, faith-based and governmental agencies to develop and promote service opportunities
- Strengthening communities by engaging local citizen participation
- Developing a long-term volunteer program



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LOUISIANA
Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 

LA Serve VISTA Project
Louisiana Serve Commission
Telephone: 225-342-6289
Email: nauck@crt.state.la.us

To: Potential LA Serve VISTA Host Sites
From: Nicholas Auck
Subject: Host Site Application

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Host Project Site with the LA Serve VISTA Project. LA Serve VISTA is a statewide project designed to provide support to parishes, communities and residents working to improve Louisiana life. LA Serve VISTA helps the people of Louisiana reduce the level of poverty found in many of our parishes. LA Serve VISTA strives to address poverty through these focus areas:

- 1) Engaging nonprofit, faith-based and governmental agencies to develop and promote service opportunities
- 2) Strengthening communities by engaging local citizen participating
- 3) Developing a long-term volunteer program
- 4) Disaster Recovery efforts where appropriate

As a part of the host site selection process, we are looking closely at the commitment of host sites to AmeriCorps*VISTA, the capacity of sites to manage the project, the ability of sites to comply with program requirements, and the understanding by host sites of National Service.

PLEASE NOTE:

Completion of this application is not a promise of placement.
All projects must meet Federal and Project Guidelines.

Name _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Answer the questions on the following pages about how you plan to integrate AmeriCorps* VISTA Members in your program. Please call Nicholas Auck at 225.6289 if you have any questions.
PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE CLEARLY.

Tell us about yourself:

1. Briefly describe the following regarding your organization and the community it serves.
 - A. Organization's contact information, mission, and history
 - B. The specific poverty need which your organization addresses
2. Describe the project plan you want to implement by integrating an AmeriCorps*VISTA member into your organization.

*Please keep in mind your project plan should clearly demonstrate a realistic effort to help bring individuals and families out of poverty permanently; not simply to make poverty more tolerable. The responsibilities and duties of the AmeriCorps*VISTA members should be geared towards building a permanent infrastructure within the applicant organization. The proposed project results should be measurable and convey the actual impact the project has on the individuals, families, and communities being served.*

3. How long will it take to complete the project?
4. How many AmeriCorps*VISTA members are you requesting?
5. Who will provide direct supervision to AmeriCorps*VISTA?
6. Complete the attached VISTA Assignment Description (VAD). This document will include your VISTA Member's goals, activities, and tasks. Please see the example provided and use as a guideline. Keep in mind that you must fill out a separate VAD for each position description you wish to implement.

Questions 1-5 should be a one- to two- page document. Question 6 should be the completed VAD using the template provided. There is also a SAMPLE VAD provided for your review. Send your responses to :

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AmeriCorps*VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

VISTA Project:		VISTA Member Name:	
Site Name:	Assignment Area:	Date:	
Goal <i>(from VISTA Project Plan):</i>			
Activity 1: Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:			
Activity 1 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:		Activity 1 Completed (date): _____	
Activity 2: Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:			
Activity 2 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:		Activity 2 Completed (date): _____	
Activity 3: Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:			
Activity 3 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:		Activity 3 Completed (date): _____	
Activity 4: Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:			

SAMPLE

AmeriCorps*VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

VISTA Project: Corporate Recruiter		VISTA Member Name:	
Site Name: Applicant Organization Operations Dept.	Assignment Area: Marketing /Corporate Relations	Date: 12-22-08	

Goal Working with both the Operations and Volunteer Departments of Applicant Organization Resource Center, the VISTA will be responsible for developing relationships with local and regional corporations, with the goal of recruiting businesses to become sponsors or to support the Applicant Organization Resource Center.	
Activity 1: Develop a database of business contacts Step 1: Using the Applicant Organization board members, staff, and local volunteers to create a list of local and regional businesses that should be pursued. Step 2: Using MS Access, create a searchable database that includes contact info, as well as additional information that is needed by both the Operations and Volunteer Departments.	
Activity 1 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:	Activity 1 Completed (date): _____
Activity 2: Develop Marketing materials for soliciting corporate supporters. Step 1: Develop an informational portfolio that can either be mailed or given to a potential corporate supporter that explains the organization's mission, goals, and projects. Step 2: Working with the Operations Department, develop a Power Point presentation that will appeal to potential corporate supporters. Step 3: Develop a campaign to recruit corporate supporters.	
Activity 2 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:	Activity 2 Completed (date): _____
Activity 3: Develop relationships with potential corporate supporters Step 1: Using the database, identify potential corporate supporters, and contact them. Step 2: Meet and cultivate potential corporate supporters and find out what level of involvement they wish to have. Step 3: Working with both the Operations and the Volunteer Departments, (depending on the wishes of the potential corporate supporter), develop a plan that will create a strong partnership between the Applicant Organization Resource Center and the potential corporate supporter. Step 4: Create a newsletter that will keep our corporate supporters, funders, and volunteers involved and informed with the activities of Applicant Organization Resource Center. Step 5: Represent the Applicant Organization Resource Center at business networking events, social events, and other activities where potential corporate supporters may be present.	

Activity 3 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:	Activity 3 Completed (date): _____
Activity 4: Assist with the development and implementation of recurring fundraisers. Step 1: Working with the Operations Department, assist in identifying potential corporate sponsors for the fundraiser, and develop a solicitation plan for requesting their sponsorship. Step 2: Secure corporate sponsorship for fundraisers, and make sure that fundraiser adheres to sponsors wishes and branding. Step 3: Develop thank you gifts and other promotional items that will be given out during a fundraiser, making sure that we adhere to each corporate sponsor's wishes. Step 4: Assist in design and implementation of fundraiser as needed.	
Activity 4 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:	Activity 4 Completed (date): _____
Activity 5: Recruit at least 2 corporate sponsors that pledge at least \$25,000.00 each. Step 1: Using database and other contacts, identify potential corporate sponsors. Step 2: Design and implement a program that will best recruit the identified corporations to sponsor the Applicant Organization Resource Center. Step 3: Design and implement a program that keeps committed corporate sponsors informed and involved in the organization's activities	
Activity 5 Comments/Summary of Accomplishments:	Activity 5 Completed (date): _____

Excerpted from:
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[Highlights Added – Potential Host Site Applicants should pay particular attention to sections with **BOLD RED text to ensure clear understanding of purpose of LA Serve VISTA Projects]**

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Guidelines for Selection of AmeriCorps*VISTA Sponsors and Projects

Part I. Program Directions

The Corporation for National and Community Service was established by the National and Community Service Act Trust Act of 1993, enacted into law on September 21, 1993. The Corporation manages several types of service initiatives, including the AmeriCorps National Service Network of programs. AmeriCorps is locally driven, offering resources to communities to design and implement their own solutions while maintaining a national AmeriCorps identity.

The mission of AmeriCorps has four components:

Getting Things Done—achieving demonstrable results in meeting Americans' educational, public safety, human, and environmental needs.

Strengthening Communities—uniting citizens from different backgrounds and bringing together diverse institutions in partnerships to transform communities in need.

Encouraging Responsibility— strengthening the spirit of citizenship through service, education about service, and understanding of communities.

Expanding Opportunity—offering education awards in return for service, and providing invaluable life- and job-skills to members which they will carry through the rest of their lives.

Within the AmeriCorps National Service Network of programs is AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America), authorized under Title I, Part A of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended (Pub. L. 93–113). **The statutory mandate of AmeriCorps*VISTA is “to eliminate and alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems in the United States by encouraging and enabling persons from all walks of life, all geographical areas, and all age groups * * * to perform meaningful and constructive volunteer service * * * where the application of human talent and dedication may assist in the solution of poverty and poverty-related problems and secure and exploit opportunities for self-advancement by persons afflicted with such problems. In addition, the objective of**

(AmeriCorps*VISTA) is to generate the commitment of private sector resources, to encourage volunteer service at the local level, and to strengthen local agencies and organizations to carry out the purposes (of the program)” (42 U.S.C. 4951).

AmeriCorps*VISTA provides full-time, full-year members to local public and private non-profit organizations which have goals in accord with AmeriCorps*VISTA’s legislative mission, and have projects determined and defined by those to be served. **Each AmeriCorps*VISTA project must focus on the mobilization of community resources, the transference of skills to community residents, and the expansion of the capacity of community-based and grassroots organizations to solve local problems. Programming should encourage permanent, long-term solutions to problems confronting low-income communities rather than short-term approaches for handling emergency needs. AmeriCorps*VISTA project sponsors must actively elicit the support and/or participation of local public and private sector elements in order to enhance the chances of a project’s success, as well as to make the activities undertaken by AmeriCorps*VISTA self-sustaining when the Corporation for National Service no longer provides those resources.**

Part II. Criteria for Selection of AmeriCorps*VISTA Sponsors and Projects

A. Criteria for Sponsorship

The following provisions explain the organizational requirements that must be met to sponsor an AmeriCorps*VISTA project; and the criteria necessary for selection of any AmeriCorps*VISTA project.

1. Organizational Selection Criteria

The applicant must:

- a. Be a public sector organization or a private organization designated as non-profit by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). (Organizations that have submitted applications for non-profit status from the IRS will also be considered.)
- b. Comply with applicable financial and fiscal requirements established by the Corporation for National Service or other elements of the Federal Government.
- c. Have resources available for AmeriCorps*VISTA members to perform their tasks; i.e., space, consumable supplies, telephone, on-the-job transportation reimbursement; and be able to provide emergency cash advances when needed.
- d. Be able to mobilize community, public, and private sector resources to achieve short-term program goals and long-term project self-sufficiency goals, and to encourage local part-time volunteer service.
- e. Have the capacity and commitment to recruit, orient, train, supervise, and otherwise support locally and nationally-recruited AmeriCorps*VISTA members in appropriate capacity-building roles.
- f. Have an understanding of the concept of, and be committed to, promoting national service and AmeriCorps.

- g. Be experienced in the issues related to the beneficiaries of service and those being addressed by the proposed project.
- h. Have the capacity to build community partnerships and collaborative efforts in order to achieve project self-sufficiency.

2. Project Selection Criteria

The proposed project must:

- a. Address the needs of low-income communities and otherwise comply with the provisions of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, (DVSA) as amended (42 U.S.C. 4951 et seq.) applicable to AmeriCorps*VISTA and all applicable published regulations, guidelines and Corporation policies.**
- b. Lead to building organizational and/or community capacity to continue the efforts of the project once AmeriCorps*VISTA resources are withdrawn. This will be demonstrated through measurable goals and objectives and the stated AmeriCorps*VISTA tasks which are attainable within the time-frame of the project.**
- c. Be designed to generate public and/ or private sector resources and to promote local, part-time volunteer service.**
- d. Describe in measurable terms the anticipated self-sufficiency outcomes at the conclusion of the project, including outcomes related to the sustainability of the project activities.**
- e. Clearly state how AmeriCorps*VISTAs will be trained, supervised and supported to ensure the achievement of program goals and objectives as stated in the project work plan.**
- f. Be internally consistent; the problem statement which demonstrates need, the project work plan, the AmeriCorps*VISTA assignment description, and all other components must be related logically to each other.**
- g. Ensure that AmeriCorps*VISTA and community resources sufficient to achieve project goals and objectives are available.**
- h. Involve beneficiaries of service in project development and implementation throughout the life of the project.**
- i. Have the management and technical capability to implement the project successfully.**
- j. Describe how the number of AmeriCorps*VISTA members being requested is appropriate for project goals and objectives, and how the skills qualifications described in the application are appropriate for the assignment(s).**
- k. Describe how AmeriCorps*VISTA assignments are designed to utilize the full-**

time member's time to the maximum extent.

B. Prohibited Activities

Applicant and current sponsoring organizations must ensure that the following prohibitions on AmeriCorps*VISTA and sponsor activity are observed:

1. AmeriCorps*VISTA are prohibited by law from participating in:

- (a) Partisan and nonpartisan political activities, including voter registration and transporting voters to the polls.
- (b) Direct or indirect attempts to influence legislation, or proposals by initiative petition.
- (c) Any outside employment while in AmeriCorps*VISTA service.

2. AmeriCorps*VISTA sponsoring organizations are prohibited by law from:

- (a) Carrying out projects resulting in the identification of such projects with partisan or nonpartisan political activities, including providing voters with transportation to the polls and any voter registration activity other than making voter registration applications and nonpartisan voter registration information available to the public on the premises.
- (b) Assigning AmeriCorps*VISTAs to activities which would otherwise be performed by employed workers and which would supplant the hiring of or result in the displacement of employed workers, or impair existing contracts for service.
- (c) Requesting or receiving any compensation for the services of AmeriCorps*VISTA members.
- (d) Using funds to finance, directly or indirectly, labor and anti-labor organization and related activities.
- (e) Using funds appropriated to carry out AmeriCorps*VISTA programming for any activity for the purposes of influencing the passage or defeat of legislation or proposals by initiative petition unless otherwise permitted under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended.

3. AmeriCorps*VISTA members are prohibited from engaging in any religious activities as part of their duties. AmeriCorps*VISTA sponsors are prohibited from conducting any religious instruction, worship, proselytization or other religious activity as part of the AmeriCorps*VISTA project.